3.

AN

EXPOSURE

OF

SOME OF THE

FALSE STATEMENTS

CONTAINED IN

Dr. CARSON'S PAMPHLET,

ENTITLED,

"REMARKS," &c.

IN A LETTER ADDRESSED TO THAT GENTLEMAN.

By JAMES DAWSON, Surgeon.

"When a man, to support a certain cause, is found, in the compass of a few lines, to be the author of assertions which are not well founded, what confidence can be reposed in any assertion he may make in the same cause?"—*See Dr. Carson's "Remarks," page* 88.

LIVERPOOL:

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EXPOSURE, &c.

SIR,

THE attack which, in your "Remarks," you have made upon my conduct and professional opinions, furnishes me with an indubitable plea for publicly defending them.

You have made this attack without provocation of any kind from me; unless the expression of my opinion on a subject of great public interest, can be considered as a provocation. Of the expression of that opinion, you, of all men, had the least right to complain. You, Sir, had yourself, in a manner altogether unprecedented, endeavoured in a court of justice, to invalidate the opinions of others. And as the question in dispute was in the highest degree interesting to every professional man, it ought not to have excited any

surprize in your mind, nor any indignation, that I, amongst others, should have ventured to state my opinion upon it. Further than this, I have given you no cause of offence. I have acted with you in the Dispensary for upwards of three years; and I cannot charge my memory with any instance in which my conduct towards you has been in any respect hostile or unbecoming. I confess, therefore, that I felt considerable indignation on perusing those parts of your pamphlet in which you have thought proper to advert to me personally. That I differed with you in opinion on the question of pregnancy in the case of Miss Burns, is most certain. I stated the reasons for my opinion in the attestation which I gave to the authors of the "Vindication." But of that attestation, not one word relates to you. If you had deemed my communication worthy of notice, it would certainly have been more decorous on your part to have commented upon it without having recourse to those personalities which disgrace so many of your pages. Not content with including me in that general anathema, in which you piously invoke heaven to interdict, "literature or science, or any thing that is esteemed good, honorable or praiseworthy," from those gentlemen who gave their attestations on the case of Miss Burns,

you have indulged yourself in a strain of sarcasm against me. You have endeavoured to shew, not only that my opinion is inapplicable to the question, but that my representation of the appearances in the case at the workhouse, was distorted by the warmth of my imagination.* In this instance, you seem desirous to insinuate that I am capable of misrepresenting these appearances to serve a particular purpose. Your meaning is too obvious to be mistaken. As you proceed a little further, you take no pains to conceal your design; for, in a few lines afterwards, in the same page, you assert, that I am one of those who are "very convenient for supplying appropriate cases to any who may be in want of them." And in the next page you assert, that Liverpool is a residence well adapted for those who wish to publish on medical subjects; that they need only mention "*what cases and facts they want*," and that I and another gentlemen "*have such cases and facts ready made, or nearly so, requiring only some slight touches; to be adapted all occasions.*" These are serious charges, and may, perhaps with propriety, become matters of enquiry in another place. They are designed to affect my character; and whatever my opinion may be of

* See Remarks, p. 97.

the person who has made them, such insinuations can, by no man be altogether disregarded.

Your awkward attempts to render me ridiculous, I despise: your efforts to injure my character, I hold in abhorrence. You have represented me as a very young man, with a view, solely, to infuse doubts with respect to my professional experience, and consequently to destroy the effect of my testimony. You have not the advantage very greatly over me, Sir, in respect of age, certainly not at all in respect of experience; for my opportunities of observation in the Institutions to which I am now Surgeon, have been very greatly superior to any which have, until lately, been within your reach. Your sneers on this subject might therefore have been spared. But you despise professional experience, when put in competition with your so much vaunted "mathematical learning and mechanical philosophy." What your real acquirements in these departments of knowledge may be, it is not easy to determine. We have yet had no proof of any such acquirements. But if they are really such, as you seem disposed to imagine them, it would not have been amiss if you had been a little better instructed in another kind of knowledge, which is of great use in

the business of life;—the knowledge of yourself, —and of your duties towards your neighbour.—With such instruction, and with a conduct corresponding to it, you might have made yourself as much respected by the profession here, as you are now contemned. Your folly, vanity, and rashness have involved you in a dilemma out of which you will never be able to extricate yourself; but if you are willing to profit by experience, you have been on this occasion taught a lesson which may be highly useful to you in the future part of your life.

You must pardon me, if I should now venture to approach you a little closer on the subject of your insinuations respecting me. Give me leave to ask you, Sir, if you were in your senses when you asserted with such assurance and falsehood that I had "cases and facts ready made for those who might be in want of them; requiring only slight touches to be adapted to all occasions?" or did you write these offensive and defamatory paragraphs, in one of those paroxysms of phrenzy which have so frequently, as I am told, seized you since the trial of Mr. Angus? What foundation have you for such assertions as these? The cases of mine to which you allude, and which I

mentioned after Mr. Park's paper was read at the Library, so far from supporting Mr. Park's opinion, led to conclusions directly contrary to it. You must have known this, for you were present at the time; and you yourself returned thanks to Mr. Park for his valuable communication. Why, then, do you now allude to these cases? Your misrepresentation of them is most shameful; and can only be ascribed either to the most malignant perversity of temper, or the most blundering stupidity of intellect. These remarks cannot be considered too severe, by any who will recollect the provocation I have received from you, and the attempt you have made to destroy my character for veracity. You have no claim to courtesy from me, and you shall have none. I speak to you with the boldness and firmness of a man who is conscious of not having merited such treatment, whom you have attempted to injure, and from whom you have received no just cause of offence. Fabrications of facts are, you must know, neither more nor less than falsehoods; and, like other falsehoods, are mean and contemptible; but fabrications of facts and cases, or the adaptation of them to all, or any, occasions, are in medicine particularly dangerous; because their effect is to mislead others, perhaps in circumstances the most

critical and important. When therefore, you assert that I have "cases and facts ready made, and capable of being adapted by slight touches, to all occasions," are you aware, Sir, of the nature or tendency of your slander? Has your moral education been so imperfect, or are you so blinded with infatuation, that you cannot perceive that it has a direct tendency to ruin my character for veracity? Believe me, Sir, it is from no respect to your opinion that I dwell upon this subject—— Your opinions upon that, or upon any other subject, are of very little importance in my estimation. But the opinion of my friends, and of the public, is of peculiar value to me; and I cannot suffer you or any man to publish to the world assertions so prejudicial to me as those in your pamphlet, without the most pointed animadversion. I shall not, however, be satisfied with animadversion alone. I call upon you publicly to state one instance, in which I have ever fabricated any fact or case for any purpose, or have ever misrepresented any fact or case that has come before me. If you cannot prove the truth of your assertion, you will find yourself in a predicament much more serious than any in which you have yet been involved. The charge of falsehood will rebound upon your own head with a force which you cannot resist. If

you are silent, I have a right to conclude, that you cannot substantiate the fact. And in such circumstances, I will not scruple to give that appellation to your conduct which it will manifestly have merited.

After these remarks, I will enter upon an examination of your criticism of my opinions.

I can account in some degree for the pains which you have taken, and the attempt you have made to invalidate my testimony on the case of Miss Burns ;—indeed, it would have surprized me, could you have remained perfectly temperate upon your perusal of evidence so decidedly hostile to your opinion ; but I am not without hope, that when the irritation of your feelings shall have subsided, and the light of reason shall have dawned through the veil of error which at present seems to obscure your perceptions, you will be disposed, rather to give me credit for the integrity and accuracy of my opinion published in the " Vindication," than to indulge yourself in unavailing and splenetic abuse.—

With this brief comment on your " Remarks" I proceed to a plain narration of facts.

On the 18th September, a young woman, five days after her delivery, died, under circumstances which excited suspicion that her death was occasioned by violence. I was requested by the Coroner, Mr. Molyneux, to examine the body.—After a careful dissection of the body, I extracted the womb; judging that the inspection of it might be of importance towards dissipating the doubts respecting the recent delivery of Miss Burns, to which your extraordinary reasoning had given rise. Several eminent Practitioners in the town were invited to see this lately delivered womb. You certainly cannot charge me with any unfair procedure, or attribute my conduct on this occasion to any other than an anxious desire for the investigation of truth; you were invited, and came for the purpose of inspecting the womb in question, about nine o'clock at night; and according to the report of Mr. Graham, the gentleman in whose presence you saw it, certainly, the inspection you then took, (and you have taken no other,) could not give you any correct impression of the peculiarities of its structure; and yet, upon this inspection, slight and negligent as it appears to have been, you have not hesitated to offer a decided opinion. But, it is beneath "a mind disciplined by mathematical learning, and acquainted with the principles of mechanical philosophy," to sub-

mit to the tedious drudgery of careful anatomical investigation. Satisfied, however, as I assuredly am, of the important and accurate information obtainable in this way, I endeavoured by frequent and careful inspection of this womb, which no one will question, had recently parted with a child, as well as by repeated comparison of the appearances it exhibited, with the descriptions of eminent authors who had treated on the subject, to familiarize my mind with the marks and peculiarities natural to a lately delivered womb. I had not yet seen the womb in the possession of Mr. Hay:——While the torrent of public indignation ran so violently against you, I was silent; nor should I in any way have interfered on this unpleasant subject, had not the circumstance to which I have alluded naturally excited my curiosity to see the womb of Miss Burns. I expressed a wish to this effect, and soon afterwards, received an invitation to examine the womb, but *I was not invited to give any opinion concerning it.* It is material in this place, towards establishing the independency of my opinion, to state, and I assert it without fear of contradiction, that I undertook the examination with a mind unbiassed, and a pre-determination to judge and decide for myself.

I never heard of any conspiracy against you:

I know of no combination: I am bound to no opinions: I have no doctrines to support. I already knew from actual experience and dissection and from an attentive research into reputed authorities, what really were the uniform and natural appearances of a womb lately delivered; and I hope I shall not incur the charge of presumption, in flattering myself, that I came to the examination of the womb of Miss Burns, not unprepared, or incompetent to form a judgment concerning it. After a minute inspection, I could not, nor, I will venture to affirm, could any man, of unprejudiced mind, avoid feeling a conviction, that this womb had as certainly parted with a child as the one to which I have before alluded; the large venous sinusses which pervade their substance, are alike evident in the cut edges of both,* and are seen directing their course towards that part of the inner surface of the wombs to which the after-births had been attached, and by the separation of which, a number of large open orifices

* These sinusses, ample enough to receive the end of the small finger, have, by an unaccountable (and no doubt accidental) absence of memory, entirely escaped your recollection, for they are not once mentioned in your "Remarks,"—indeed I am not surprised at this omission, when I recollect that you refused to look at these sinusses, when I pointed them out to you, at Mr. Hay's.

or remains of vessels are left. All these are plainly seen communicating with each other, and they form a plexus of the largest and most frequent communications that are known among the vessels of the human body. The resemblance of these two wombs is, indeed, in every essential particular, clear, satisfactory, and decisive. My opinion on this point is unaltered, and unalterable. And here let me ask you, what was the line of conduct which in your conception I ought to have pursued under a conviction so irresistible? You appear to expect that I should have waited until your "Remarks" were published before I presumed to offer an opinion; here, I must be allowed to differ from you;—you must first convince me that I ought to discredit the evidence of my own senses, before I can be induced to imagine it was my duty to pay that deference to your opinion, of which you seem so remarkably tenacious. I know no claim which you have to such deference from any man; for you have publicly declared your ignorance of this subject.

In page 99, of your pamphlet, you are pleased to say, "it will appear from the date of their opinions, that none of the Liverpool gentlemen had made any communication on the subject until after the reception of the opinions of the

London Professors, whose sentiments and even language, they have adopted,"—permit me to speak for myself;—I certainly must acknowledge I had heard, cursorily, that the opinions of the London Professors were favourable to those given by the medical witnesses for the crown ; and of this I informed you immediately afterwards when you called in at the Dispensary ; and which intelligence, I very well remember, you did not receive with the most perfect indifference ; but, Sir, I did not know a single expression,—the structure of a single sentence contained in the letters of the London Professors, or even who those professors were, until I saw their opinions published along with my own in the "Vindication."—With what consistency, by what right, you have presumed thus to dispute the independency of my professional opinions, I am at a loss to conceive ; the motive is best known to yourself, but be that motive what it may, I trust the sincerity of this declaration will counteract the injurious tendency of your insinuation.

I shall now refute a more material accusation which you have ventured to make against me. You have had the boldness to affirm that I am in the habit of accommodating my sentiments to the opinions of others ; and you have brought forward

with much apparent exultation and triumph, an instance in proof as you suppose, of such a disposition on my part; now, Sir, here, again, I will set you right. No doubt you are aware that, in the earlier months of pregnancy, the womb is liable from the mode of its suspension, to have, occasionally its bottom bended backwards and downwards, and under the hollow of the sacrum; and this accident, owing to the connexion which subsists between the contiguous surfaces of the bladder, and neck of the womb, almost always happens when the former is fully distended, and more immediately in consequence of a sudden shock, or accident; and of this description were the cases whice I have seen, Now, on the evening when the subject of the Retroversion of the womb was discussed, Mr. Park, (whom I cannot mention without sentiments of high respect, and whose earnestness to communicate any important fact which may occur in the course of this practice, is well known,) to the surprize of all who were present, related the histories of several uncommon cases which he had seen, in which the retroversion took place when the *bladder was empty*, and the *patient laid quietly in bed.* Now, Sir, you see the cases which on that occasion I stated to have come under my observation, were directly at variance with those related by Mr. Park. It

will not avail you to plead ignorance of this circumstance, for you have already informed us that you were present at the relation of these cases.

In exposing this fact to your conviction, I own I feel astonished that a man engaged in the exercise of a liberal profession, and who boasts of the "manly independence of the scholar", should abandon his mind to the control of a propensity so incompatible with moral rectitude. But to proceed with your mis-statements: At page 74 you assert, that the womb of Miss Burns, when you saw it in the presence of Mr. Christian and myself, was in a "state of great decay;" and "its structure, of course, in a great measure desroyed;" this is indeed begging the question; the womb of Miss Burns is now in a state of preservation; and its structure not of course in a great measure destroyed: so far from any destruction of its texture having taken place, every essential character remains plain and obvious.

Your subterfuge of denominating the numerous large orifices in the neighbourhood of the bottom of the womb, "nothing else than communications between different parts of the cellular membrane," ought also to be exposed:—I wish to impress upon the public mind, for I cannot suppose you

seriously imagine that these appearances were really what you described them, that these numerous and large oval spaces are absolutely the remains of blood-vessels left upon the separation of the after-birth.

Your next sentence, that "the same openings were found in the same extent upon its neck," is another misrepresentation. One large distinct cavity, of the use of which you seem to be ignorant, you attempted to inflate, but without success; and yet you have had the nerve to assert, that the "same openings were found in the same extent upon the neck, as were found upon the bottom of the womb." You must certainly recollect the surprize of Mr. Christian and myself, and which you know we mutually expressed at the same moment, at the deception into which you had fallen: we told you that you mistook the glandular follicles of the neck of the womb, for the remains of blood-vessels, and you even attempted to inflate the largest of these;—but, to use your own words, "as inflation had not been so much practised here as upon the bottom," the stubborn follicle would not yield.

Every one conversant with the physiology of the pregnant womb, must know, that these cavi-

ties or follicles which encircle its neck, are destined to secrete the viscid mucus which commonly fills up and hermetically seals its mouth, soon after conception, and which is thus interposed as a guard between the child in the womb, and any foreign bodies.* A little before labour commences, it separates and comes away, after which, these cavities pour out a thinner fluid which facilitates the birth of the child.†

At page 77, you say, "you took the dimensions of the supposed mark of the after-birth, (as you are pleased to call it) according to our limitation, and found, by a measurement made in our presence, that the circular mark upon the bottom of the womb was seven inches and a half in diameter one way, and six inches and a half the other way." This is another remarkable instance of your inaccuracy. I will describe the method you adopted to ascertain these dimensions, in order as it appears, to render them subservient to your intention. *You first inverted the womb, and then stretched and pulled it upon a large globular*

* Burns, of Glasgow.

† The celebrated Dr. Hunter imagined it was a very difficult matter to break through this guard, when it was intended to bring on premature delivery; but the history of more modern times, records instances of its easy practicability.

water jug, and in this state of inversion and expansion your measurement was taken; any arguments therefore founded upon the extent of the mark alluded to, as taken in this manner could be neither satisfactory nor fair. So far I have had occasion to notice your misstatements alone; a harsher epithet might apply to many of them; but it is sufficient for me, in this place, to have reduced your assertions to a standard by which their value may be duly appreciated.

I shall now undertake to expose the fallacy of those arguments upon which you have chiefly rested, as to the impossibility of the extent* of the mark in question having been occasioned by the separation of the after-birth;—and which you say, "is an objection which all the authorities in the world can never overcome."

Though in your measurement of this mark, you have extended the diameter each way two inches, I will wave this consideration, as I shall

* I have now in my possession the after-births of twins, joined together, whose diameters are 17 inches one way, and eight the other way.—The diameters of many after-births exceed eight inches, as I have repeatedly, and as every Practitioner in Midwifery, must have seen.

not require any adventitious aid to prove the absurdity of your reasoning on this point. You have supposed that there is an uniform extension of the mark of the after-birth, compared with the general extension of the womb;—or, in other words, that there is an uniform contraction of the mark of the after-birth, compared with the general contraction of the womb; this supposition, as applicable to the womb after delivery, is manifestly erroneous; for if an uniform contraction of that part to which the after-birth is fixed, compared with the general contraction of the womb after delivery, always took place, it would never happen that the after-birth, (which is loosened by the same contraction which expelled the child, continuing to act,) would remain undetached after the expulsion of the child. Every Practitioner in Midwifery knows that this adhæsion and retention of the after-birth, occasionally takes place:—sometimes, consequent upon a tedious or difficult labour, and not unfrequently from previous illness. Under any of these circumstances, the action of the womb will occasionally cease soon after the expulsion of the child, and before the separation of the after-birth, and yet no loss of blood ensue. And this torpid, or atonic condition, will often continue for a considerable time; and particularly if the womb has been emptied very suddenly: or

in other words, the after-birth will, occasionally, remain entirely undetached, merely from a want of power in the womb to loosen and expel it.—Now if it should happen, that the unfortunate parent die, after the expulsion or extraction of the child, and before the separation of the after-birth, there would be no effusion of blood into the cavity of the womb; and if the after-birth were timely removed after death, there would, upon dissection, be found neither after-birth, nor clots; the womb would be in a partially distended and flaccid state, and the surface of the placental mark would occupy a space so ample as to bear no proportion to the general contraction of the womb. It is, therefore, evident, that although there had not been any flooding at the time of death, yet the mark near the bottom of this womb *could* be occasioned, and assuredly *was*, by the separation of the after-birth.*

Should Miss Burns have died of flooding, and in her exhausted state, a comparatively small and slow loss of blood would have destroyed her; and should the womb, in consequence, be distended

* Page 71, "Remarks," You say, "Upon the supposition that there was no flooding at the time of death, the mark at the bottom of the womb certainly could not be occasioned by the separation of an after-birth!"

with clots, you would, I presume, have expected to have found it upon dissection, gorged with blood :—this would have been an expectation certainly not unnatural; but you need not be told, Dr. Carson, that the womb may as readily and as easily be emptied (sanguineâ manu,) after, as bebefore death. I say, Sir, it is possible.—*I dare not say it was so*;—and then, the womb would be found upon dissection, empty; and to describe the appearances in your own words, and which appearances have chiefly led your mind to entertain doubts of the recent delivery of Miss Burns,—"it would be in a very distended state, have a lax and bag-like form; and would encompass a great space in a state of expansion."

At pages 78, and 79, you state, that the mark alluded to, "*exactly* covers the bottom of the womb, a part to which an after-birth is very seldom, if ever, in that manner attached."—This is a palpable misrepresentation, and scarcely deserves a serious answer. The fact is, it does not cover the bottom of the womb, but is on the side, and near to the bottom of the womb; and I will take upon myself to affirm that this mark in the womb of Miss Burns, is most commonly the place to which an after-birth is attached.

Before I finally take leave of your "Remarks," I must be permitted briefly to notice one other observation you have made at page 66: and which places in an obvious point of view how little you seem to be acquainted with the subject on which you have treated. You say "If the child had died some weeks before its birth, the after-birth becoming also in time dead, that action would take place between the womb and the after-birth which usually takes place between living and dead matter, and the after-birth would be separated from the womb in the same manner that a mortified part is separated from a living; in that case, at the time of death, there would be no open vessels upon the internal surface of the womb, the mark of the attachment of an after-birth scarcely if at all perceptible," and in your opinion, "any mark that would have been left, would not have been rough, but smooth, as it would have been covered with a new cuticle! and therefore," you say, "it is evident that the rough mark at the bottom of the womb in question, could not have been the mark of an after-birth."—What must be your surprize, Sir, when you are told that the after-birth remains attached to the womb, not only for some weeks after the death of the child, but that it will remain and increase in its size, even though the fœtus had been blighted from the very

early part, until the completion of the usual period of pregnancy. Dr. Denman, in his engravings tending to illustrate the generation and parturition of animals, gives a plate of a morbid human ovum, and the circumstance deserving attention, is the small size of the embryo compared with that of the after-birth ;—it appears that the embryo had been blighted in the early months of pregnancy : *but the after-birth adhered, increased in its size, and remained in the womb until the end of the ninth month.*

I shall briefly notice that you have omitted to draw a line of distinction between appearances incidental to a state of disease, and that of pregnancy. The walls of the womb in Mr. Hay's possession, are more than half an inch in thickness. If you will take the trouble to examine a passage in Lieutaud, p. 319. Tom I. you will find the following case, in which the appearances were actually found upon dissection : the sentence runs thus.—" In opening the body of a girl whose belly was remarkably prominent, the womb was found so largely expanded, that it occupied almost the whole of the cavity of the belly, having compressed the intestines into a very small compass ; —the inside of the womb was stuffed with reddish coloured matter resembling shreds of flesh : the

walls of the womb were in many places *nearly eroded through, and as thin as paper.*"

I have as yet said nothing of your "Hydatids." —You appear not to know that whenever this disease has existed, it has invariably been apparent upon dissection ;—the undermentioned cases* are so exactly in point, on this subject, that I cannot omit introducing them to your notice. You will observe that the wombs were found upon examination, distended either with water, hydatids,

* *Dropsy of the Womb.*—" A woman after her delivery, still retained an enlarged belly, which, gradually increasing during four years, she died.—Upon examining the womb, it was found to contain an incredible quantity of bloody-coloured water; and after this had flowed away, it was imagined that its cavity would have received a boy of ten years old, so ample was it. The mouth of the womb was shut up by a tumor." —Bonetus.

" A woman aged 50 years, died of dropsy of the womb. This viscus was found upon dissection distended to an enormous size, containing to the amount of seventy pints of water. There were also observed all around its inside a number of small bladders adherent; at its neck was also found a hard tumor of the size of a gooses egg.—E Miscell. Curiosis."

" A woman who was believed by every body to be pregnant, having excceded her usual period of pregnancy, at length became sensible of her situation; and in a few months more died. The womb was found full of water, a circumstance which no one suspected."—Donatus.

moles, or polypi. Now, as none of these appearances were discernible in the womb of Miss Burns, your fanciful hypothesis respecting "hydatids," as applied to the case of that lady, must vanish into air,

"into thin air."

I might here, perhaps, with some degree of propriety, dismiss this subject; but you must pardon me, Sir, if I should expostulate with you a little further upon your conduct. In defending the odd medley of opinions which you maintained

"Upon inspecting the body of a young woman who was supposed to have been pregnant, the womb when opened, presented a round membranous bag, filled with innumerable watery vesicles."—MERCATUS.

"In examining the body of a young woman who had for a long time been afflicted with, and eventually died in consequence of a tumor in the belly, the womb was found amazingly distended, and an enormous mole in its cavity, near to its bottom, accompanied with a large quantity of Hydatids.—E. MISCELL. CURIOSIS.

"A woman, who had for several months together parted with a pint of clear water daily from the womb, at length died, and upon examination, the womb was found greatly enlarged, and its cavity nearly choaked up with Polypi.—PAYERUS.

Vesalius, aslo relates the histories of several women, in whose wombs after death, were found several gallons of water; and of others, in whose wombs, and different parts of the belly were found adhering, numerous small Hydatids, or bladders of water.

on Mr. Angus's trial, and have since supported in your pamphlet, you have thought it necessary to traduce the characters of a number of respectable men who have given their written opinions in the case of Miss Burns. You have assumed as a fact, that a conspiracy has been formed for the express purpose of injuring your medical reputation, and you consider me as one of the party. You say that you can perceive internal proofs of such a conspiracy in the different attestations, and reason upon it, as if it were actually proved. The charge of conspiring against you, is in its own nature too ridiculous to deserve a moment's notice. I will, however, again tell you, that I never heard of such a conspiracy until I read your account of it: and I am very well convinced that such a conspiracy never existed. It is a mere fable of your own invention, intended to divert the public attention from the points in dispute, and to represent yourself as an oppressed man. It can deceive none but those who are determined or disposed to be deluded by your sophistry and misrepresentations. If I have condescended to notice your attack, it is because I am younger than others of that respectable body whom you have so outrageously abused, consequently less known, and more likely to be injured by your malevolent aspersions. Your insinuations against myself, in

particular, and one of my colleagues, are of such a serious nature, that I must have been thought regardless of my own character if I had not endeavoured to expose to the public the treatment I have received from you. You have so completely given way to the impulse of your passions on this occasion, that you do not appear to be aware of the inconsistencies into which you have fallen.—I might swell this pamphlet to an immoderate size if I were to point out all your inconsistencies. I will, however, mention a few of them. You have asserted that, in the part you took in Mr. Angus's trial, you were "supported alone by the consciousness of rectitude—by the imperious demands of duty;" and by the conviction that you might one day have to answer before the awful tribunal of heaven for your pusillanimity, if you had declined an examination at the trial. And all this is introduced with an air of solemnity, as if the fate of the world had depended on your decision at the moment: totally forgetful that, but a very few pages before, you had been dealing out your slanderous malevolence without measure and without bounds, against all those who had ventured to differ with you in opinion. Did it never occur to you that you might also have one day to answer to heaven for such a display of your malevolence? You have also asserted in the language which you

have borrowed without acknowledgment, of a celebrated orator, that *it has ever been a rule of your life to do what your conscience told you was right, and leave the consequences to God.** From a man swayed and influenced by this virtuous rule, a conduct very different from that which you have adopted, might have been expected. If you really believe that in the whole of this affair you have been directed by your conscience, your mind must be in a state, of all others, the most deplorable. For let me ask you, Sir, *Did your conscience tell you it was right* to traduce the characters of those Gentlemen who have given their attestations in the case of Miss Burns? *Did your conscience tell you it was right*, to assert that they had formed a conspiracy to ruin your medical reputation? *Did your conscience tell you it was right* to invoke heaven to forbid to them "literature or

* You have borrowed this passage from a speech of the Hon. Mr. now Lord Erskine.

"It was a maxim strongly inculcated upon me in my youth, to do what my conscience told me was right, and to leave the consequences to God. I shall carry with me the memory, and I hope the practice of this parental lesson to the grave."

You appear to have felt no hesitation in asserting, that in my attestation, I had used the language of other men. Do you feel no shame, on being convicted of plagiarism in this instance?

science, or any thing that is esteemed good, honourable, or praiseworthy?" *Did your conscience tell you it was right* to intersperse through your pamphlet the falsehoods and misrepresentations with which it abounds? *Did your conscience tell you it was right* to assert that I and my Colleague had "cases and facts ready made for any that wanted them, requiring only slight touches to be adapted to all occasions?" And, because I endeavoured to elucidate whilst you had attempted to involve in darkness and uncertainty the obliterate manifest fact of Miss Burns having lately been delivered of a child, *Did your conscience tell you it was right* to single me out from this "tribe," as you have insolently chosen to denominate them, "of Liverpool Practitioners in medicine," and to hold me up to the public as a man upon whose veracity there can be no reliance! I might thus go on to shew you the errors of your monitor, but I am weary of the task, and forbear. I can scarcely suppress the emotions of contempt and indignation which I feel for the proceedings of a man who professes to be actuated by the noblest sentiments, but whose conduct is directly at variance with them almost at every step. You appear to have acted in this affair without judgment, prudence, or discretion. You have, like many other men, unfortunately formed a wrong estimate of the cha-

racters of others as well as of your own. This world, Sir, is not to be carried by storm. If you are not already convinced of this truth, it will sooner or later be forced upon your conviction. Next to the steady influence of virtuous principle, manners, obliging and conciliatory, and a regard to the opinions, feelings, and sentiments of other men are the only means by which you can ever hope to be respected. But before you can regain the ground you have lost here, some previous measures are, on your part, indispensible. You must make effectual and public reparation to those whom you have publicly slandered and abused. You must recall or retract the offensive insinuations you have uttered. You must humble yourself before the public, and exhibit the most decisive proofs of repentance and sorrow for the conduct you have pursued.

So far as respects myself, if you do not think fit to retract the vile, false, and virulent attack which you have made, both on my honor as a man, and on my means of subsistence in my profession, it will be for my serious consideration whether I shall not appeal to the justice of my country for redress.

Mount Pleasant, 1st January, 1809.

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